



Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name and Designation: **Scattered Wildlife (Trempealeau County), Pine Creek Remnant**

County(ies): **TREMPEALEAU**

Property Acreage: **297**

Property Managers: **Mark Rasmussen, Dan Hatleli**

Forestry Property Code(s): **6207, 6215**

Master Plan Date: **None**

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

LANDSCAPE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Scattered Wildlife (Trempealeau County) and Pine Creek Remnant are state owned properties located in northeast Trempealeau County, near the City of Osseo. The properties are located in the Western Coulees and Ridges ecological landscape, which is characterized by rolling to hilly topography. Dendritic drainage patterns are well-developed in this mostly unglaciated Ecological Landscape. Numerous spring-fed (coldwater) headwater streams occur here. Cool water streams are also common. The primary objective for these properties is to provide public hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities as well as other recreational opportunities such as hiking or birdwatching. Common game species found on the properties include: deer, turkey, rabbits, and squirrels. Maintaining wildlife diversity and healthy game species populations are achieved through habitat management. Pine Creek is designated as an "Area of Special Natural Resource Interest" (ASNRI). The majority of Pine Creek Remnant is open to hunting and fishing (108.26 acres) while the remaining acreage (61.74) allows public fishing only. All of Scattered Wildlife (Trempealeau County) is open to hunting and fishing

HISTORY OF LAND USE AND PAST MANAGEMENT

Acquisition of these properties began in the 1960s. The properties have since grown to a combined 297 acres in size. Establishment of these properties was to preserve and protect wildlife and coldwater stream habitat and allow a variety of public recreation uses with the knowledge that opportunities for management of fish and wildlife resources were assured under public ownership.

The properties have been managed through land acquisition and invasive species control. The primary objective is to provide hunting, trapping, and fishing opportunities; common game species include: deer, turkey, rabbits, and squirrels. Maintaining wildlife diversity and healthy game species populations are achieved through habitat management.



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Forest management has included tree plantings, invasive species control, and timber harvesting.

Several management practices have been completed on Rem – Pine Creek:

- From 2002 to 2008, approximately 1.1 miles of instream habitat were improved using various techniques such as plunge pools, overhead covers, bank stabilization, riffles, and current deflectors.
- Two large wooden routed Hunt/Fish area signs were installed on each side of property facing State Highways 10 and 53.
- All of the property boundaries were posted with “Public Fishing and Hunting” or “Public Fishing Only” signs per acquisition conditions. In the past, signage was checked on an annual basis. Now signage is checked on an as-needed basis.
- For the past few years, there have been share-cropping agreements on the larger, fee-title tracts.
- Electrofishing surveys of the fish populations in the North were conducted in various years from 1962 to present. Since 2007, two trend sites (surveyed annually) were established. Pine Creek is predominantly a brook trout stream.
- Beaver activity is common throughout the Fishery Area. Annual removal of beaver dams and trapping are necessary to prevent damage to overall stream conditions and trout habitat restoration work.

PROPERTY CONTEXT/LANDSCAPE

Contextually, these properties are situated in an area that is highly dissected and fragmented with agricultural fields and other open areas. Subsequently, opportunities for large block old forest development for area sensitive forest interior birds is limited. However, this more fragmented setting offers great opportunities for “edge” species and early successional game and “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” as identified within the state’s Wildlife Action Plan. See below for species/opportunities.

WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN/SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED

Although the property is not specifically listed in the Wildlife Action Plan’s Implementation document for the Western Coulee and Ridges Ecological Landscape (WCREL), one priority “community type” is listed in the document that the property contains; Coldwater stream (listed as a Driftless Area Feature of Continental Significance).

Species of Greatest Conservation Need associated Coldwater streams, Springs and Spring runs, early successional forest, pockets of old forest, as well as the shrublands, and wetlands of the properties include; Blue-winged Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Field Sparrow, Northern Bobwhite quail, American Woodcock, Red-headed Woodpecker, Whip-poor-will, Willow Flycatcher, Pickerel Frog, Four-toed Salamander, Wood Turtle, Big Brown bat, Eastern red bat and water shrew.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREA

The property does not fall within a Conservation Opportunity Area as identified within WI’s Wildlife Action Plan.



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NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY (NHI)/RARE SPECIES

No rare species have been identified within or near the property.

HIGH VALUE CONSERVATION FORESTS (HVCF) OR OTHER RESOURCES/NATURAL COMMUNITY TYPES LIMITED IN THE LANDSCAPE

None identified

BIOTIC INVENTORY STATUS

The rapid Ecological Assessment for Driftless Area Streams was completed in 2012. However, these small parcels likely didn't receive much attention due to the size and scope (entire Driftless Area) of the project as well as the lack of quality resources identified via aerial photo in the planning stages of the project.

http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/fwp/nhc/reports/DASstreamsREA_int.pdf

CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES (INCLUDING TRIBAL SITES)

The properties contain archeological and historical site indicators. Contact with the State Historical Society is required prior to any activities near known sites.

RECREATIONAL USES

Fishing, hunting, and trapping are the primary recreational uses of the properties. Access is provided adjacent to 2 major State Highways (10 and 53) and multiple local road crossings.

Pine Creek contains 3.04 miles of Class I and 5.71 miles of Class III trout water. Brook trout is the predominant trout species. Hunting opportunities exist for whitetail deer, wild turkey, grouse, woodcock, squirrels, and black bear. Trapping opportunities exist for beaver, muskrats, mink, and other furbearers.

Other recreational uses include Hiking, Cross Country Skiing, Wildlife Viewing, Bird Watching, and Berry Picking.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Moderate to high levels of buckthorn and honeysuckle are located throughout the properties. Reed canary grass is common in the wetland areas of the properties.

SOILS

Most soils in the area are windblown loess of varying thickness, with alluvium in the floodplains. The dominant soils in the uplands are mainly silt loams, with the steep slopes containing mostly sandy loams. Both of these are classified as moderate to well-drained soils. The lower swamp/bog areas of the property are dominated by very poorly drained muck soils. Poorly drained silt loam soils are also present.



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CURRENT FOREST COVER

The Scattered Wildlife property has 258 forested acres (2005-2018 reconnaissance) that are comprised of:

Bottomland Hardwoods: 143 acres (56%) – 100% is 90 years of age with size classes of 15”+

Red Pine: 52 acres (20%) – 37% is 56 years of age with size classes of 5”-9” and 9”-15”, 38% is 43 years of age with size classes of 5”-9”, 25% is 33 years of age with size classes of 9”-15”.

Oak: 43 acres (17%) – 93% is 93 years of age with size classes of 15”+, 7% is 63 years of age with size classes of 5”-11”.

Red Maple: 11 acres (4%) – 100% is 34 years of age with size classes of 5”-11”

Aspen: 9 acres (3%) – 100% is 42 years of age with size classes of 5”-11”

The Rem – Pine Creek Fisheries Area has 34 forested acres (2018 reconnaissance) that are comprised of:

Central Hardwoods: 28 acres (82%) – 89% is 78 years of age with size classes of 15”+, 11% is 18 years of age with size classes of 0”-5”

Red Pine: 6 acres (18%) – 100% is 18 years of age with size classes of 5”-9”.

FUTURE MANAGEMENT

Forest Management Objectives:

These properties are managed primarily to restore habitat conditions within the stream corridor, protect water quality, and to provide quality wildlife habitat. Forest management objectives include maintaining existing forest types and developing a diversity of age classes both young and old forest areas for both game and non-game species dependent on these types. This will largely be accomplished through sustainable silvicultural

systems that will increase the diversity and the structural complexity of wildlife habitat while at the same time avoiding disturbance to riparian areas along the stream corridor. Aspen is somewhat limited on the properties, but is an important cover type for many species of wildlife. Regeneration harvests should focus on providing new age classes of oak and other early successional species. Scattered pine plantings provide cover for wildlife and offer some aesthetic relief to the hardwood cover types. The pines will be thinned periodically to provide roosting and nesting opportunities.



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1. Maintain oak cover types where feasible.
 - a. Diversify age classes with emphasis on developing younger stands
 - b. Crop tree release oak in young stands.
 - c. Regenerate oak stands where feasible and promote oak in young mixed hardwood stands.
 - d. Promote/retain larger diameter trees.
2. Promote other early successional forest types.
 - a. Promote aspen
 - b. Promote stands of central hardwoods.
3. Maintain pine plantations.
 - a. Promote large crowned trees for wildlife and aesthetics.
4. Maintain grass cover type
5. All stands
 - a. Consider planting opportunities for desirable species such as oak.

Property Prescriptions (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives):

OAK - Utilize even-aged management targeting a rotation age of ~100 years. Maintain and promote oak through planting, timber stand improvement methods, prescribed fire, thinning, seed tree, shelterwood, clearcut, and other techniques described in the DNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook. Promote the growth and retention of large oak through techniques such as thinning and extended rotation. Reserve/legacy trees should be retained as groups or individuals throughout the property within harvested stands

CONIFERS – Thin plantations every 8 to 10 years (beginning in 2020) or when stocking warrants to maintain healthy, vigorous stands. Leave dead and dying pines for cavity and nesting birds and for coarse woody debris. Where substantial natural regen (particularly oak) exists in the understory, plantations will be allowed to convert back to the natural hardwood/pine cover types following the final harvest of the planted red pine. Abundant oak regen has been noted in pine plantations on portions of these properties.

RED MAPLE/CENTRAL HARDWOODS – Utilize both even and uneven aged silvicultural methods such as thinning, seed tree, shelterwood, clearcut, as well as timber stand improvement methods and other techniques described in the DNR Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook to regenerate these stands. Promote tree species for wildlife food sources that produce mast, such as, oaks (red, black, white, bur, and swamp), black cherry, and hickory. Utilize even aged harvest methods to promote the young forest component on the property; especially adjacent to field edges.



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ASPEN – Clearcut to regenerate these stands. Under full sunlight, aspen sprouts back quickly and vigorously providing excellent habitat for several wildlife species including game species such as ruffed grouse and deer. Sprouts from coppiced aspen stands fill in with thousands of stems per acre during the first growing season post-harvest and generally out-compete invasive species competition.

BOTTOMLAND HARDWOODS - This cover type will mostly receive passive management. Reed canary grass is abundant in the bottoms of the Buffalo River. This is inhibiting recruitment of new trees which has led to low stocking levels, little to no regeneration and thus, limited silvicultural options. Water quality BMPs and access constraints are also a factor given braided channels, sloughs and ox-bows within the bottoms and floodplain. Any harvesting that does take place will strictly be frozen ground only.

ALL STANDS:

- Utilize BMP's for Water Quality to protect streams and wetlands when conducting timber sales.
- Identify invasive plant species and implement control practices such as prescribed fire, hand pulling, chemical and mechanical control to eliminate or reduce negative impacts.
- Utilize BMP's for Invasive Species to help limit the introduction and spread of invasive species when conducting timber sales
- Retain reserve/legacy trees as groups or individuals throughout the property within harvested stands
- Follow DNR's Species Guidance Documents:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/guidance.asp>. to protect rare species. In cases where species guidance documents haven't yet been developed, avoidance to rare species will occur via practices such as time of year restrictions, modified harvest boundaries, and/or consultation with rare species experts.
- Identify and protect any Archeological or Historical sites prior to management activities and plan.

Prescriptions shown for the properties below reflect planning through WisFIRS. These prescriptions may not all be completed, depending on if the stand develops slower than expected or if the maximum allowable cut for the Jackson and Trempealeau 'Other State Lands' properties is already exceeded.



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Scattered Wildlife Areas – Property # 6207:

2018: Comp. 2 Stand 1 – 40 acres of oak regeneration harvest

2020: Comp. 206 Stand 2 – 20 acres of red pine thinning
Comp. 207 Stand 2 – 13 acres of red pine thinning
Comp. 227 Stand 1 – 5 acres of red pine thinning
Comp. 227 Stand 3 – 34 acres of invasive plant control
Comp. 227 Stand 3 – 34 acres of bottomland hardwood thinning
Comp. 227 Stand 4 – 1 acre of red pine thinning
Comp. 228 Stand 1 – 8 acres of red pine thinning
Comp. 228 Stand 2 – 5 acres of red pine thinning
Comp. 228 Stand 3 – 26 acres of bottomland hardwood thinning

2035: Comp 207 Stand 7 – 3 acres of oak regeneration harvest

2064: Comp. 2 Stand 2 – 11 acres of red maple regeneration harvest

Rem - Pine Creek Fisheries Area – Property #6215:

2025: Comp. 205 Stand 2 – 6 acres of red pine thinning

Comp. 205 Stand 5 – 3 acres of central hardwood thinning



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Approvals:

Regional Ecologist Date

Property Manager Date

Property Manager Date

Forester Date

Area/Team Supervisor Date